United Nations A/C.1/71/L.21

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
14 October 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
First Committee
Agenda item 98 (g)
General and complete disarmament: transparency in armaments

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Transparency in armaments

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 46/36 L of 9 December 1991, 47/52 L of 15 December 1992, 48/75 E of 16 December 1993, 49/75 C of 15 December 1994, 50/70 D of 12 December 1995, 51/45 H of 10 December 1996, 52/38 R of 9 December 1997, 53/77 V of 4 December 1998, 54/54 O of 1 December 1999, 55/33 U of 20 November 2000, 56/24 Q of 29 November 2001, 57/75 of 22 November 2002, 58/54 of 8 December 2003, 60/226 of 23 December 2005, 61/77 of 6 December 2006, 63/69 of 2 December 2008, 64/54 of 2 December 2009, 66/39 of 2 December 2011 and 68/43 of 5 December 2013, entitled "Transparency in armaments",

Continuing to take the view that an enhanced level of transparency in armaments contributes greatly to confidence-building and security among States and that the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms constitutes an important step forward in the promotion of transparency in military matters,

Welcoming, in that regard, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as an important element in the contribution of the United Nations to international peace and security,

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Welcoming also the consolidated reports of the Secretary-General on the Register, which include the returns of Member States for 2012,[1] 2013[2] and 2014,[3]

Welcoming further the 2016 report of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development, prepared with the assistance of the group of governmental experts,[4] in particular the recommendation that the Secretary-General appeal to Member States in a position to do so to provide information on their international transfers of small arms and light weapons in their annual report to the Register and the recommendation that the seven plus one formula be utilized on a trial basis for the period leading up to the deliberations of the next Group of Governmental Experts, as the diversion of licit transfers of small arms and light weapons continues to pose a threat to peace and security, undermines human security and exacerbates the illicit trade in wildlife, and as the transparency of licit transfers of small arms and light weapons can contribute to tackling these problems and building confidence and trust between Member States,

Welcoming the response of Member States to the request contained in paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 46/36 L to provide data on their imports and exports of arms, as well as available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies,

Welcoming also the adoption by the General Assembly and the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty[5] on 2 April 2013 and 24 December 2014, respectively, and noting that the Treaty remains open for accession by any State that has not signed it,

Welcoming in particular the increase in transparency in armaments that is provided by the Treaty,

Noting the focused discussions on transparency in armaments that took place in the Conference on Disarmament in 2013, 2014 and 2015,

Expressing its concern at the decline in reporting to the Register,

Stressing that the continuing operation of the Register and its further development should be reviewed in order to secure a Register that is capable of attracting the widest possible participation,

1. *Reaffirms its determination* to ensure the effective operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as provided for in paragraphs 7 to 10 of resolution 46/36 L;

2. *Endorses* the report of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development and the recommendations contained in the consensus report of the 2016 group of governmental experts;[6]

3. *Decides* to adapt the scope of the Register in conformity with the recommendations contained in the 2016 report of the Secretary-General;

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[1] A/68/138 and Add.1.
[2] A/69/124 and Add.1.
[3] A/70/168 and Add.1.
[4] See A/71/259.
[5] See resolution 67/234 B.
[6] A/71/259.

4. *Calls upon* Member States, with a view to achieving universal participation, to provide the Secretary-General, by 31 May annually, with the requested data and information for the Register, including nil reports if appropriate, using the updated online reporting tool, on the basis of resolutions 46/36 L and 47/52 L, the recommendations contained in paragraph 64 of the 1997 report of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development,[7] the recommendations contained in paragraph 94 of the 2000 report of the Secretary-General and the appendices and annexes thereto,[8] the recommendations contained in paragraphs 112 to 114 of the 2003 report of the Secretary-General,[9] the recommendations contained in paragraphs 123 to 127 of the 2006 report of the Secretary-General,[10] the recommendations contained in paragraphs 71 to 75 of the 2009 report of the Secretary-General,[11] the recommendations contained in paragraphs 69 to 76 of the 2013 report of the Secretary-General[12] and the recommendations contained in paragraphs 81 to 94 of the 2016 report of the Secretary-General;[13]

5. *Invites* Member States in a position to do so, pending further development of the Register, to provide additional information on procurement through national production and military holdings as part of their background information and to make use of the de facto reporting form, or any other method they deem appropriate, for the respective elements;

6. *Reaffirms* its decision, with a view to further development of the Register, to keep the scope of and participation in the Register under review, and to that end:

(a) Calls upon Member States to submit their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation, by completing the questionnaire to be dispatched by the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat;

(b) Requests the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened in 2019, within existing resources, with the broadest possible participation, in line with the recommendation contained in paragraph 93 of the 2016 report of the Secretary-General, and on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to prepare a report on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development, taking into account the work of the Conference on Disarmament, relevant deliberations within the United Nations, the views expressed by Member States and the reports of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, with a view to taking a decision at its seventy-fourth session;

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[7] A/52/316 and Corr.2.
[8] A/55/281.
[9] A/58/274.
[10] A/61/261.
[11] A/64/296.
[12] A/68/140.
[13] A/71/259.

(c) Also requests the Secretary-General to continue to assist Member States to build capacity to submit meaningful reports, and encourages States in a position to do so to provide assistance for this purpose upon request, including capacity to report on small arms and light weapons using the seven plus one formula, inter alia, by circulating to Member States the reporting forms, category descriptions and guidance on using the online reporting tool;

(d) Further requests the Secretary-General to provide Member States with the opportunity to submit a nil return valid for a maximum of three years, so as to increase the level of reporting to the Register, and to continue to send annual requests to participate in the Register to such Member States, as proposed in the recommendations contained in the consensus report of the 2016 group of governmental experts;

(e) Requests the Secretary-General to update and reissue the information booklet "Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers: Questions and Answers";

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement the recommendations contained in his 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2013 and 2016 reports on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development and to ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the Secretariat to operate and maintain the Register;

8. *Invites* the Conference on Disarmament to consider continuing its work undertaken in the field of transparency in armaments;

9. *Reiterates its call upon* all Member States to cooperate at the regional and subregional levels, taking fully into account the specific conditions prevailing in the region or subregion, with a view to enhancing and coordinating international and regional efforts aimed at increased openness and transparency in armaments;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on progress made in implementing the present resolution;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Transparency in armaments".